

A photograph of three young women with brown hair, smiling and looking towards the camera. They are wearing orange and red clothing. The image is partially obscured by a white curved banner at the bottom.

# TALKING is HEALTHY

**W**hen a natural disaster hits your community, everyone is touched by it. Lives change.

As a young person, you're smart and understand the natural causes of a disaster. You see the damages. You know how it has affected your family, friends and community.

What may be confusing, even frightening, is understanding your own feelings. These feelings or emotions are common. You are not the only one who is feeling this way.

The best thing you can do for yourself is to talk about your feelings and learn to deal or cope with them by taking some action.

This brochure can help guide you.

## WHAT ARE YOU FEELING?

Everyone is different. Depending on the situation, you may seem fine after a natural disaster, but then feel "out of it" weeks or months later.

Here's a list of typical behaviors that you might experience after a disaster:

- Problems sleeping, including replaying events in your mind, nightmares, sleeping too much or not sleeping enough.
- Not feeling like being around your family or friends. Isolating yourself.
- Sadness or depression. Feeling like crying.
- Negative thoughts about yourself.
- Physical problems: headaches, nausea, stomach pain, vision or hearing problems.
- Feeling angry or like you want to fight with someone or take something that is not yours.
- No interest or not doing well in school.
- Hard time concentrating or being easily distracted.
- Thoughts of using drugs or alcohol.
- Unusual fear of the weather or going outside.

## WAYS TO HELP YOURSELF...

If you are experiencing any of these feelings and they don't go away in a few days, talk to someone. Confide in a teacher, counselor, parent, church member, or friend—someone who will respect your feelings.

### Other things you can do:

- Exercise and eat regularly.
- Avoid beverages with caffeine which increases feelings of anxiety or “edginess.”
- If someone offers you drugs, alcohol or tobacco, just say NO!
- Learn relaxation exercises. Take deep breaths or sit quietly.
- Do something that makes you feel happy or special.
- Focus on one task at a time. Avoid becoming “overloaded.”
- Write your thoughts and feelings down in a journal.
- Help others! Get involved with a school project or help clean up at home or in your community.
- Heal at your own pace. Don't let others rush you.

## ASK FOR HELP

For free assistance in dealing with the pressures and aftermath of wind- and flood-related storms, please call:

**1-800-850-8775**

Trained staff will listen to your concerns, provide information and refer you to other resources if necessary. It's free and confidential.

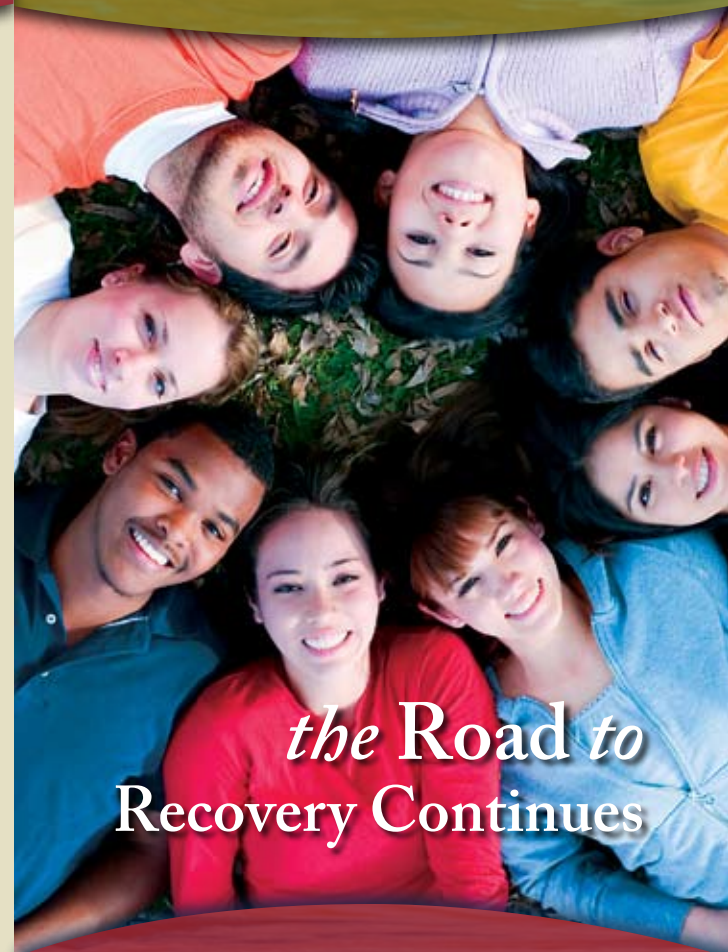
- If there is a life-threatening emergency, please call 911.
- For Suicide Prevention, call 1-800-273-8255. TTY users, call 1-800-799-4TTY (4889)
- For all other mental health crisis needs, please call the Washington State Mental Health Crisis Line in your county at:

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT**  
[www.dshs.wa.gov/DisasterOutreachServices](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/DisasterOutreachServices)



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## THE STORM HAS PASSED...



## *the Road to* Recovery Continues

**A GUIDE FOR YOUTH  
TO HELP WITH THE AFTERMATH  
OF A NATURAL DISASTER**

